



NEWS RELEASE

San Francisco District Office
455 Market St. San Francisco CA 94105
(415) 744 6771

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Contact: Gary Marshall
Release Number: S F 07 18
E-Mail: gary.marshall@sba.gov

Public Forum Set for Small Business Owners to Comment on Federal Regulatory Enforcement

(San Francisco, CA) -- Small business owners, community leaders and representatives of trade associations who are concerned about excessive enforcement of federal rules can voice their complaints at a **U.S. Small Business Administration Regulatory Fairness Board Forum in San Francisco on Feb. 5, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.**

The forum will be held in the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce Board Room, located at 235 Montgomery St., 12th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94104.

SBA National Ombudsman Nicholas Owens, members of the SBA's Region IX Regulatory Fairness Board (which serves California, Arizona, Hawaii, Nevada, and Guam) and representatives of federal regulatory agencies will hear comments and complaints about regulatory enforcement and compliance and will discuss the impact of federal regulations on small business.

"One of the leading concerns small business owners face is unfair enforcement of federal regulations. They also worry about telling their stories because they fear retaliation by federal agencies," Owens said. "Small business owners want to play by the rules and comply with federal regulations. We want to encourage Federal regulators to provide effective compliance assistance, rather than go straight to the penalty stage. Regulatory enforcement should be effective, not excessive."

This forum offers small business owners a chance to express their concerns about federal compliance practices and to learn how to more effectively deal with federal regulatory requirements.

Comments and complaints presented during this forum will be directed to the appropriate federal regulatory agency. This information will also be shared with federal officials in the National Ombudsman's Annual Report to Congress, and with leadership of federal regulatory agencies to assist them with their enforcement actions.

The forum is open to the public. Those wishing to testify should contact Gary Marshall of the SBA's San Francisco District Office at (415) 744-6771 or by email at gary.marshall@sba.gov before the forum. Should small business owners or representatives be unable to attend, written testimony may be sent in advance of the forum to be included in the public record.

Comments and concerns about federal enforcement actions can be addressed directly to SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman at 1-888-734-3247 (REGFAIR). For more information about the forum, please visit the web site www.sba.gov/ombudsman.